

Elder Wirthlin dedicates pioneer cabin

A restored log dwelling — one of two remaining cabins from Salt Lake Valley's first settlement — was dedicated July 22 by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Council of the Twelve.

The cabin is located in the Old Deseret Village, a living history museum at Pioneer Trail State Park, adjacent to This Is the Place Monument, east of Salt Lake City. It originally belonged to Levi Evans Riter and his wife, Rebecca Dilworth Riter, who arrived in the valley on Oct. 2, 1847.

Elder Wirthlin spoke at the dedication, as did his wife, Elise, who is a great-granddaughter of the Ritters.

Speeches and musical numbers were presented at the Social Hall in the village. Afterward, the gathering walked or rode in a horse-drawn wagon to the cabin west of the Social Hall, where Elder Wirthlin delivered the dedicatory prayer.

In his address, the apostle told of marathon runners in ancient Greece who carried lamps containing olive oil burning in small, shallow dishes. The runners were to reach the finish line with their lamps still burning; thus, they could hope for victory so long as their lights continued to burn.

He compared the lights carried by the marathon runners to the light of faith, obedience to the principles of the gospel and dedication to the Prophet



Photo by Paul Barker

Joseph Smith, carried by the pioneers who came to the valley.

The cabin, in its restored state with period furnishings, was presented to the park by Ann Brest van Kempen, president of Old Deseret Foundation, which funded the restoration.

The cabin was located for many years in Liberty Park. It was acquired by Pioneer Trail State Park in 1980.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, wearing suit, chats with visitors at dedication of restored Riter cabin at Pioneer Trail State Park.

One other original cabin from the first settlement in the valley still exists. It was located on Temple Square for many years and is now exhibited on the plaza between the Museum of Church History and Art and the Church Family History Library.

Pioneers remembered from coast to coast

Church members celebrate heritage with games, parades and picnics

Continued from page 9

and sang songs, said Elder Noel Bowcutt, public communications missionary of the Tennessee Nashville Mission.

Church members in Wilmington, N.C., used their Pioneer Day activities to help commemorate the 250th anniversary of Wilmington, N.C. Their "Pioneer Birthday Celebration," was listed in the city's year-long festivities calendar, said Carolynn Skipper, stake public communications director.

In addition to holding pioneer games and displaying pioneer relics including a handcart, a colonial parlor in all its elegance was recreated in the meetinghouse. Items from the Church's early days in the area, including the original sacrament dishes, were also shown visitors.

"Hundreds of people visited the meetinghouse," said Sister Skipper. "Various local officials, including Wilmington Mayor Don Betz, attended. Newspapers and television covered the celebration, the first time a Church event has received that kind of coverage."

Pioneer Day in the Longview Texas Stake, under the direction of Pres. John F. Woodman, took on a distinctly western flavor as pio-

neer activities, such as carding, spinning wool and tossing horse shoes, were enjoyed by members.

One of the more arduous events to honor the pioneers was held by the Cheyenne (Wyo.) 7th Ward, which re-enacted a four-day handcart march July 19-22 over 48 miles of the original pioneer trail.

Some 35 members trekked from Pine Bluffs, Neb., to Cheyenne, pushing three handcarts.

"I feel it is important that our children feel a kinship with their pioneer heritage," said Bishop Paul Gage. "It is important for us to know how much they sacrificed, and to feel a part of what they went through."

The group received police escorts as they passed through cities. On the fourth day, when they arrived at a bluff overlooking Cheyenne, ward member Jim Ross told about Brigham Young's first sighting of Salt Lake Valley, and after a hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," he commented, "This is our place."

In California, members throughout the state held picnics and pioneer activities during the week of July 24. Handcarts were used in a race by members in the Lawndale and Torrance North stakes on July 22. They also played pioneer

games, held contests and ate dinners.

The handcart race became international as members of Japanese, Hispanic, and Polynesian wards competed. Handcarts were built by the elders quorums of each ward. The handcarts were loaded with 450 pounds of food storage. "Each team had to load the cart, make the race, and then unload the cart," said Marco Holbrook, cultural activities specialist for the Torrance California North Stake. Of nine entries, the team from the South Bay Singles Ward won the race, she said.

The Fort Collins Colorado Stake celebrated with a day of activities, including a parade and bread-making contest.

Costume helps youngster in Fort Collins Colorado Stake appreciate pioneer heritage.

Photo by John Clarke

